

the suburbs. Thither a dog trails him the same night, and he crawls at command ignominiously from under the pile of hay.

The dog no doubt is what he did not foresee. But the best of canine detectives is the German police dog, whose attentions the escaping soldier has to chance.

Forsbrey's latest, a fortnight old now, must have been his masterpiece if it is true that the guard set to watch his isolation cell was the strongest ever set in Auburn on an individual prisoner. What he did has been variously reported. Just how he did it he only knows.

He used his pet tool, a saw, but how he came by the saw the prison authorities say they cannot imagine. He took it with him, and it was not on him when he was recaptured. As soon as he escaped Margaret Ryan was looked for. At the time of writing she had not been found.

#### Sawed Bars in Cell Roof.

The bars he sawed were in the roof of the cell. Once through them, his way to the wall seems to have been comparatively clear. After a few days at large he was discovered, starving, in a box car at Locke, N. Y., trying to beat his way west with a string of empties. He could not have got far in any case because of his failure to live off the "enemy country"; he had rustled only some bran to eat after leaving the prison.

Like simple failures defeat most convict escapes. In 1906, when Frank Schlieman escaped from Sing Sing, one newspaper published the statement that during thirty years escapes from the riverside prison had averaged one a year and only two had finally succeeded. The two were Tom Leamy, a lifer, who slipped out during a fire in the prison in 1876, and Jim Blaine, whose subsequent whereabouts the authorities never learned.

Schlieman himself did fairly well at keeping out, once out. He had gone up for counterfeiting. His escape, made in December, was a climb in the dark over a yard gate; as a trusty he had access to the yard.

The Hudson was thinly frozen along the shores. Footprints were found in the snow and a hole in the ice. This inspired a lovely sob story of how Schlieman, driven insane by his failure to master fractions in the prison arithmetic class, had committed suicide. He had even left a sheet of examples in fractions on the ice!

#### Wild Bullet Kills Woman.

But in July, 1909, in the course of the burglary of a Brooklyn home by two men, the wife and mother of the household was killed by a wild shot fired by one man during his grapple with her athletic son. The burglar dropped the revolver and jerked loose. As he was getting away the young man picked it up and fired, the bullet smashing his arm and going on into his body, but not preventing his pal from helping him off. Found by the police, the wounded man turned out to be Schlieman, who had eluded them two years and five months. He died in the electric chair.

A nine days sensation was made, in the fall of 1892, by a double escape from the supposedly impossible Sing Sing death house. The two murderers Pallister and Roehl enticed a guard into the cell of one of them, whereupon, as the guard told it later, Roehl threw pepper in his eyes and held him while Pallister frisked him.

Just how this was managed is not clear, unless they shared a cell; nor is it clear with what tools they set to work at the roof. There were several enigmas in connection with their escape.

#### Held Up the Second Guard.

When a second guard came in they stuck him up with the first one's revolver, took his keys and locked him in their cell for company for the guard with smarting eyes. They are said to have offered to free every murderer in the death house. One there at the time was the poisoner Carlyle Harris. The offer refused, they resumed operations, got out through the roof, climbed the wall, found a boat on the river bank and put out in a furious storm that was howling over the Tappan Zee.

Three weeks later their bodies were fished from the water near the West Shore showing indications of a fight to the death of both, or a double suicide.

Forsbrey's most notable contemporary rival, possibly his superior, is John Mohr, "the Flying Dutchman." Mohr also has boasted that prisons can't come too strong for him. Burglary is the blackest mark on his record; but when it comes to escaping he has made use of his feet, taking care of himself so handily that after the first one he was at large nine years, and after the second, nine months. In all he has made three: from the

county jail, from Great Meadow and from Sing Sing.

Like Forsbrey, he favors the saw, on the workmanlike use of which he could give him points. When he sawed his way through the jail window he took pains after crawling through to bend the ends of the sawed bars back into place, thus hiding his work for the time being, and affording himself a saving start of the hunt. He apparently vanished.

This happened in 1903. In 1912 he was arrested, identified and sent to Great Meadow. Thence he escaped after eighteen months, vanishing again, as it appeared. Nine months later saloon men in a section of Queens were systematically shaken down at the point of a bandit's gun. The bandit, trapped, proved to be Mohr, and no sooner was he in the county jail again than he all but succeeded in repeating his first escape.

Sent to Sing Sing on November 23, 1916, he crawled through a wash room window of which he had sawed a bar and found himself hanging twenty feet above the adjoining roof. Nevertheless he righted the cut bar's ends before he dropped. He was caught in a flat in Second avenue, where he tried to use a baby as a shield against police revolvers.

The quarters of the criminal insane at Matteawan have seen more convincing escapes than Harry Thaw's. One was made in April 1895, by five inmates, whose captain and strategist was Oliver Curtis Perry, the picturesque young lunatic train robber from up State.

#### Tricked Into Giving a Drink.

He and the others were in isolation cells in a separate pavilion reserved for dangerous cases. Along in the evening Perry tricked a roundsman into bringing him a drink; as the roundsman told the story afterward, he then overpowered him, got his keys and knife, gagged him, tied him to the bed, locked the solid oak door on him, released the four others and stole with them through the vestibule, on either side of which, in small rooms, are said to have been attendants fast asleep.

The quintet next entered the chapel, and through it, by a scaffold in place for repairs to the ceiling, reached the attic and the roof. Then began a wild moonlight scramble over the asylum's extensive and continuous system of roofs. The es-

capers finally slid to the ground outside by the leads. All were caught within a week, three in a Weehawken freight yard.

In March, 1910, a burglar named Alexander Devoe was one of two Sing Sing convicts to escape, starting from temporary cells in what had been a tool house. They broke the bars, let themselves down from the windows by ropes of their bedding, climbed the wall, dropped into the river, swam along under the bank, and finally took to the Central tracks and ran for it. Devoe stayed at large eight days.

Easily the smoothest recent article, not as an escaper but as a criminal of the jitney movie species of social aplomb, is the man of many aliases which boil down to the name George Wilson or Charles Williams. He hails from California, and has criminal and prison records both sides of the Atlantic. For a felon he has been a man of parts—mechanic, chauffeur, railroad brakeman and an expert salt water swimmer. He specializes as a burglar in the apartments of the well to do.

#### Polite Burglar Always Armed.

During the summer of 1912 he figured in the news as "the polite burglar," because of his habit of buttering his victims with company manners whenever they happened to wake up and find him at work. He always showed a revolver—but if you believed the special writers:

He did it so politely

That to hear him was a joy!

He was caught July 2. Fifteen days later he escaped from an eighth tier cell in the Tombs in the following manner: He climbed down a waste pipe, thence crawled to a coal hole, where he found an iron bar, felled an elderly keeper in the yard with this weapon and took the keeper's revolver, and finally got over the wall. That, at least, was the run of most accounts. A few had him simply hide in the yard after general exercise and get out when the coast was clear.

Once out, he not only provided himself with money but gathered enough to disport himself gayly around Atlantic City, where he robbed the rooms of a woman whose acquaintance he had made as a fellow guest in an apartment hotel, and then actually went to see her the next morning in response to her telephoned appeal for advice about the burglary and her loss. In doing so, however, he gave himself

away and was followed to Philadelphia and caught. His first act in the station house was to secrete the fork sent to him with his dinner. Using one of its tines, he was picking the lock of his cell when the fork was missed.

Wilson is now in the State prison at Trenton, where on January 22, 1914, he was caught just making his getaway from the yard. He had substituted paper bars for the steel ones taken from his window and had beaten a guard on leaving his cell.

Among the most recent escapes in New York State the simplest of all was John Gaskins's from Auburn March 31, 1916. Gaskins hid in a box car in the prison yard, where he had been one of an unloading gang, and let the engine do the rest.

#### Caught Near Headquarters.

He was caught a month later within a block of New York city Police Headquarters by Detective John Shea, who was quicker with a double nelson than Gaskins with his 44. The capture appealed to Shea as poetic justice, for in 1914 Gaskins, a prisoner in his charge and handcuffed to a pal in the Kings County Court House, had slipped his half of the double cuff and run away rejoicing.

None of this, perhaps, is further instructive to the soldier who may be captured by the Germans than in showing him that almost any part of almost any prison can be escaped from and without extreme mechanical finesse, but that when you have merely escaped from the prison itself the worst of your perils and hardships are still before you. Accordingly, the writer tried Houdini for information.

Escaping from cells is one of Houdini's specialties. He has done it all over the civilized world, under test conditions, and says he has had real difficulty only once. On that occasion the cell in which he was locked, stripped naked for the test, was bitterly cold, and he was numb and suffering before he mastered the lock.

The Houdini escape is by way of the lock, and depends on his expert knowledge of lock manufacture. Even if a convict or a soldier had this knowledge—which is the acquisition of a lifetime—it would probably do him no good, for the avenues of escape to which cell doors lead are always the ones best guarded.

#### Has Unusual Testimonials.

One frequently hears it said that Houdini's tests of this kind are faked—that is, that there is collusion with the police and jail authorities. If there is, Houdini has been singularly successful in persuading the authorities to give him signed certificates that would virtually amount to perjury. He has more of these than a caller has time to read through; an interesting one is dated from Washington, D. C., in 1906, and tells how he released himself from a cell in the United States jail—the same in which Guiteau had been confined—entered another locked cell to get his clothes, and then, in the presence of the guards, released the prisoners from their cells.

He has played engagements in Germany several seasons, and has there discomfited cultured cuff kings who tried to handcuff him inextricably, or defied him to do it to them, and in 1902 he sued the Cologne police, who had accused him of misrepresentation, and recovered for libel, obtaining, among other things, an apology "in the name of the Kaiser." During the trial he had to give demonstrations in court of handcuff shedding and lock opening. Naturally he knows a good deal about the manacles used by the Germans.

#### How Germans Hold Prisoners.

He has in his collection a specimen of the official German "transport chain," which he thinks would be used, if any such device were, on prisoners of war. The chain has a ring at each end. It is wound around both wrists like a figure 8; the smaller ring is passed through the larger and pulled tight, and is finally padlocked to the chain itself.

Houdini permitted the writer to padlock this thing on him as the writer pleased, and then freed himself of it almost instantaneously. The trick is simple, and once watched readily imitated. It involves a little fortitude. Houdini says the Germans would never believe he had not picked or broken the padlock, and there is no need of enlightening them with further particulars here. But this is one of the dodges which he has been showing the soldiers in the camps. He has also given the secret service fine points on German methods in his line and how to beat them.

In the delicate artistry of the picking of high grade locks, a higher branch of the subject of escapes which is a little off the present theme, Houdini declares Americans lead the world.

## New Facts About the Heart

WHY do you say that "Her heart is breaking with sorrow," "Elizabeth is light hearted," "The lion has a strong heart," "He is a man of stout heart"?

Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, according to Matthew. If you will examine this verse, as well as the other phrases, the clue and physiology behind them will be discovered. It is the simple observation that "a heart bowed down" or one "buoyed up" seems to be definitely influenced by sorrow or hope, worry or success.

In fine, the automatic muscle called the heart moves in unison with the emotions and the feelings. Absence is said to make the heart grow fonder, but if it stirs the passions it does not grow stronger.

Prof G. A. Sutherland, Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of London and an authority on heart disease, has just pointed out that within recent years there has been a revolution in the domain of cardiology, or heart knowledge. The mechanism of the heart beat, which was once thought to be due to the nerves or to chemicals, is now known to be a vital phenomenon resident in the heart tissue itself and dependent upon cleanliness and simple food.

In general, doctors used to consider the heart a sort of horse with two horse reins attached to it as a bridle, one the vagus or depressor nerve—a check rein—the other the whip or accelerator nerve. The former, the vagus, controls, steadies, guides and hinders any impulsiveness of the heart, while the latter stimulates and speeds up the heart beat.

Nowadays, however, the heart is recognized as a complicated two story house with two rooms on each floor, two chimneys—huge veins—on the roof, and two side porches—huge arteries—on the first floor.

Its four walls and their muscular deeds of derring do are now studied and reported to the doctor for judgment and treatment by means of the two new heart instruments, the polygraph and the electro-cardiograph. Unless a physician utilizes these aids his diagnosis and his remedies must needs be wide of the mark.

The activities of the heart to be considered in health or illness are its sensitiveness and elasticity, its tone or flabbiness, its rhythm and regularity, its susceptibilities and responses to passions and feelings and its power to conduct electric currents.

Formidable and remote as these terms may seem to you at first mention, they are all easily investigated by the modern heart specialist. Any disturbance of one or more of these heart qualities must be sought out and known by the doctor before he is able to take a hand to hold the horse reins, diagnose precisely what is amiss and then, like the general a real doctor must be, lay out a remedial plan of campaign.

In this regard the exact words of Dr. Sutherland come to mind: "As we study the discoveries which have been made as to the extreme complexity of the cardiac mechanism we are led to ask how this machine is controlled and how far it can be influenced by human interference."

The physiological working of the heart suggests that it is an automatic, high powered, high geared, self-starting, self-acting, self-feeding, self-lubricating, air cooled, blood heated structure with a blood driving end in view. It is, as the street saying goes, "the whole works."

Even under the stress and strain of disease it can be seen as a powerful instrument able to overcome difficulties in its own way. This is true of some valvular heart diseases, where the lesion or sore has to do with partially closed curtains or flaps called valves. These guard the exits of blood from one heart chamber to the other as well as into the arteries.

By virtue of its automatic action the heart is also safeguarded against various disturbances to which other parts of man's anatomy are subject.

At all events, it should be a great matter of consolation to healers, opiatists, thoughtists, nature fakers and doctors as well that the excellent and normal automatic action of the heart muscle after all is not disturbed in disease or in health by most of the heart tonics, cardiac stimulants and other medicines levelled with misdirected energy at the heart. It should indeed be a great consolation, because few of them ever reach the heart.